

OUT OF COUNTY APPROVAL PROTOCOL  
FOR  
RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL and EMERGENCY PLACEMENTS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Out of County Approval Protocol is to provide guidance to a county seeking the emergency placement and/or approval of a Resource Family home within the geographic boundaries of another county. This protocol does not delineate requirements for courtesy supervision of a dependent child/NMD or delinquent youth/NMD in another county. This agreement shall apply to county child welfare agencies when managing their own approvals and in those instances when the child welfare department has agreed to approve/monitor resource families recruited by probation departments.

II. DEFINITIONS

- a. "Approving county" means the county that completes the RFA process for a family.
- b. "Emergency placement" means a placement of a child/youth or NMD with a relative or nonrelative extended family member (NREFM) (not currently licensed, certified or approved) prior to Resource Family Approval.
- c. "Foster Child" means any person who is a minor dependent, non-minor dependent or ward of the Juvenile Court in a California County.
- d. "Host County" means the county that is the legal residence of the Resource Family.
- e. "Nonrelative extended family member" or "NREFM" means an adult who has an established familial relationship with a relative of a foster child or a familial or mentoring relationship with a child as described in Welfare and Institutions Code section 362.7.
- f. "Placing County" means the county of jurisdiction for a ward or dependent child/youth of a California County court.
- g. "Resource Family" means an individual or family that a County determines to have successfully met the application and assessment criteria necessary for providing care for a foster child or nonminor dependent who is under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, or otherwise in the care of a county child welfare agency or probation department.
- h. "Resource Family Approval" (RFA) means an applicant or Resource Family successfully meets the home environment assessment and permanency assessment standards adopted pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5.

### III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- a. CDSS will maintain a list that will provide a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the purposes of implementing this Protocol.
- b. CDSS will maintain a list that will provide a SPOC for the purposes of implementing this Protocol.
- c. Contiguous counties will do their own RFA approvals and emergency placements, unless those contiguous counties have an alternative agreement in place.
  - i. The approving county shall provide courtesy notification of the home approval to the host county SPOC.
- d. Individual counties may establish their own reciprocity agreements with other, non-contiguous counties that supersede the statewide Out of County Approval protocol.

### IV. EMERGENCY PLACEMENT OF A FOSTER CHILD WITH A RELATIVE OR NREFM IN ANOTHER COUNTY

For purposes of this section, an emergency placement with a relative or NREFM refers to a home that is not currently licensed, certified or approved.

- a. The county of jurisdiction may request a host county where the relative/NREFM resides (and the foster child or children are to be placed) to process an emergency placement.
    - (i) The default presumption is that the county of jurisdiction will process an emergency placement of a foster child with a relative or NREFM in another county.
    - (ii) The host county may decline processing of the emergency placement.
  - b. If the host county agrees to process the emergency placement, the placing county will take the following actions, in the order that is listed below:
    - i. The placing county will request that the host county initiate the emergency placement process with the identified relative or NREFM.
      - 1. The request will include the following:
        - a. Name(s), address and contact information of relative or NREFM
        - b. Relationship to the foster child(ren)
        - c. Age and name of foster child(ren) to be placed
- The request will be made in a format indicated on the SPOC listing and can be done by phone, email or other written communication. Receiving counties are encouraged to accept requests via phone/email/fax, including after-business hour requests, in order to expedite this process.

- ii. The host county shall respond to the request within 2 business days and provide a date that initial contact will be attempted with the family. Since this is an emergency placement request, the initial contact shall not exceed 2 days from the request.
- iii. The host county will then begin the process for Emergency placement with a relative or NREFM as outlined in the Written Directives, Section 7-01. If the emergency placement is approved, the host county will notify the placing county—verbally on the same day, and in writing within 2 business days.
- v. Once the home is approved for emergency placement, the placing county is able to make arrangements for placement in the relative/NREFM home.
  - 1. Once placement occurs, the host county shall commence the RFA process within 5 business days as outlined in Section 7-01 of the Written Directives.
  - 2. The placing county will send the Out of County referral form pertaining to the prospective Resource Family to the host county.
  - 3. The relative/NREFM shall meet the approval standards in place as set in place by the host county, including specified training requirements.
  - 4. If a courtesy supervision worker is needed for the foster child, a separate request shall be made to the host county.
- vi. If the relative/NREFM is not approved for emergency placement, the host county will notify the placing county within 2 business days and include the reason for the denial.
- c. Once the emergency placement is complete, the host county shall follow the procedures outlined in section V.

## V. APPROVAL OF RESOURCE FAMILY IN ANOTHER COUNTY

- a. When a California county seeks to pursue consideration of a relative or NREFM in another county for Resource Family approval, the county will take the following actions, in the order that is listed:
  - i. The placing county will request in writing that the host county initiate and complete the RFA process for the identified family.
  - ii. The placing county will send all documentation pertaining to the prospective Resource Family and foster child(ren) to be placed, to the host county.
  - iii. The host county will respond within 5 business days acknowledging acceptance of the request and will provide the date initial contact will be attempted with the family.
  - iv. The host county will begin the RFA process, according to their RFA processes with the prospective family and provide updates on the approval process to the placing county every 30 days.
  - v. Once the family is approved the host county will notify the placing county and provide them with a copy of the approval certificate as

well as any other documents needed to determine Title IV-E eligibility.

- vi. If the family is denied, the host county will notify the placing county and provide the reason for the denial.
  - 1. The host county will be responsible for completing the denial process, including a legal consult, sending a notice of action and due process to the family if an appeal is filed.
- b. In the case of Probation requests for approval out-of-county, the Placing Probation agency shall process the approval request, unless the host Probation agency and Placing Probation county have an alternative agreement.

## VI. SUPERVISION OF RESOURCE FAMILY HOMES

- a. Whichever county does the approval is then responsible for all subsequent activities related to the supervision and investigation of the Resource Family.

These activities include:

  - i. Criminal clearance and exemption processes
  - ii. Annual Updates
  - iii. Investigation of complaints
  - iv. Completion of the appeal process
  - v. Receipt of criminal clearance sub-arrest notification and any indicated action.
  - vi. Updated home and grounds inspection when the family moves
- b. If the host county is the approving county, the host county shall notify the placing county of any complaints or sub-arrest notifications and any actions taken against the resource family.

## VII. PLACEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Once a relative or NREFM is approved as a Resource Family that home shall be available to be considered for placement of relative or nonrelative foster child(ren) under the jurisdiction of any county. Approval of a Resource Family does not guarantee initial or continued placement of a foster child.
- b. Any county intending to place with a Resource Family approved by another county will contact the approving county Single Point of Contact prior to placement to discuss their intention.

## VIII. Additional Placements

- a. A family approved by the host county may accept additional placements as a resource family for that host county, unless the family has a child-specific approval.